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Soldiers have ‘luck’ on their side

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2nd Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt.

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – While deployed to Iraq, Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, have gained assistance in the searching of vehicles and homes for weapons and explosive materials.

The Soldiers rely on their training and accumulated experience and professionalism, but it never hurts to have a little luck on their side. Fortunately, they just happen to have a little “Luck” assigned to their battalion.

Sgt. 1st Class Lucky is a two-year-old white lab assigned to the 2nd Brigade’s Military Police Company that specializes in locating weapons caches by scent. He has been with the brigade for 14 months.

On a hot Iraqi day, temperatures can climb to 115 degrees or more. With the heat beating down, the tankers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, attached to 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., are stopping cars at a traffic control point at the Sadr al Yusufiyah water treatment facility.

Cars are stopped and searched for any weapons or improvised-explosive device-making materials such as wire, timers or artillery shells.

It's a dangerous and tedious process. The Soldiers cannot rush the searches or they might miss something and the heat makes it anything but comfortable. At times, these weathered Soldiers can be seen manning TCPs for up to fourteen hours a day, with little relief.

They never know when they might have to react, as dozens of cars move through their checkpoint everyday.

With Lucky, the job is different. The Soldiers have a special helper to assist in their never-ending task. In Lucky, they have the help of one of the best bomb-sniffing dogs in the Army.

Lucky has spent the last six months working with his trainer, learning to alert him of the presence of weapons or contraband material. Upon completion of his training, Lucky was promoted to the rank of Sgt. 1st Class. The unusually high rank is to insure that he will always outrank his trainer. The handler is also required to attend the training and upon completion, the bond that is formed between dog and handler is virtually unbreakable.

"This is undoubtedly the most amazing dog that I have ever seen. He is on his game non-stop and always ready to go to work," said Capt. John Robertson, commander, Co.C, 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt.

Lucky was with the Co. C Soldiers from May 13 to 18, conducting weapons checks, patrolling and pulling his share of guard.

He still found time to be a dog though, often playing ball with the Soldiers and enjoying the attention.

As soon as his trainer puts the harness on though, it's all business for the pooch. With his uniform on, the work begins. Fortunately, Lucky doesn't ask for much in return for the service that he provides. A little chow and some attention keeps him happy and content.

During his time with Co. C, Lucky searched dozens of vehicles everyday and ensured that no vehicle passed without him getting a sniff. The Soldiers said they felt extremely lucky to have a dog like Lucky around.

"He is one of the team. We feel better with him out here," said 1st Lt. Alexander Lane, company executive officer, Co. C.



Lucky.

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – Sgt. 1st Class “Lucky” sniffs for weapons and explosives while manning a traffic control point at the Sadr al Yusufiyah water treatment facility May 14.

(U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Pfeffer, 2nd Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt.)